

Corktown Historic District

General Boundaries:

Porter Street, Trumbull Avenue, Bagley Avenue, and the John Lodge Expressway.

Local	✓	12/24/84
State		
State Marker		
National	✓	7/31/98
Boundary Increase	✓	9/25/98



Leverette Street Rowhouses

Photographs courtesy of the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office

Historic Overview:

Corktown Historic District covers an area that was once seven different farming lots. Today, its diversity of architectural styles is representative of working class housing from the late 1840s to the early 1900s and its combination of land uses typifies development in the nineteenth century walking city. The architecture of the Corktown Historic District ranges from Federal style houses, Italiante commercial buildings, neo-Georgian townhouses, to a 1950s elementary school. This range of styles and land uses reflects a continuation of traditional development patterns within nineteenth-century walking cities in which commercial, industrial and residential uses were in close proximity and where economic and social segregation had not yet occurred.

Settlement in Corktown began to occur in the 1830s, largely by Irish emigrants responding to the potato famine. By 1850 one of seven persons in Detroit was Irish, constituting the city's largest national group. Corktown has also served as a reception neighborhood for Detroit's Maltese and Latino communities, as automobile factories in the early 1900s attracted new residents to the city. Urban renewal programs in the 1950s and 60s, the construction of the John Lodge Expressway and an expanding central business district consumed several Corktown blocks and alienated the community from

downtown. The Corktown Historic District is the last remaining evidence in Detroit of the pre-streetcar city.

